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Introduction and Acknowledgements

Editors of History in the Making

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Introduction

Lived experience alters the questions historians ask, foreclosing some research agendas while inspiring new ones. The sensitivity of historians to the lived moment is particularly visible at times of deep and significant historical change such as the world is witnessing now.

– Joyce Appleby, Lynn Hunt, and Margaret Jacob, *Telling the Truth About History*.¹

Welcome to California State University, San Bernardino's annual history journal. As with all of our previous editions, students are responsible for both the contents and editing of the journal. The editorial board believes that the fourteenth edition of *History in the Making* demonstrates the knowledge and abilities of the authors and editors, in addition to the diverse subjects that make history truly complex and pluralistic. During the turbulent times of COVID-19 and large-scale social unrest in the United States, we—as scholars and historians—find new and imperative ways to approach the past. Our hope is that this journal will be both informative and entertaining, and will remind readers of the importance of history.

This year's journal features four full-length articles, six in-memorial pieces, a state of the field section, two history in the making articles, a photographic notes from the archives piece, and a travels through history article, as well as eight reviews or analyses. Topics range from female rulers in dynastic China to the

¹ Joyce Appleby, Lynn Hunt, and Margaret Jacob, *Telling the Truth About History* (New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1995), 271.

importance of lighthouses in the history of California and the shifting methodology in the field of environmental history.

Many of the articles in the fourteenth edition of *History in the Making* recognize the importance and complexity of history and history writing. From the full-length articles to the book reviews and in-memoriam pieces, the works included within this edition acknowledge the need to incorporate marginalized voices and perspectives when reckoning with the past. Five out of the six in-memoriam pieces explore the influence of historic figures, both from and for marginalized groups, some of which include women, Black people, and Indigenous communities in the United States. On the other hand, the remaining in-memoriam article for Rush Limbaugh reminds us of the disparity between political and social views that continues to divide Americans.

Four of the articles included in this year's edition explore the complexities of World War II and the Holocaust by centering often overlooked and ignored perspectives. Author Jessie Williams' article, "Sexual Violence Against Women During the Holocaust: Inside and Outside the Extermination Camps," challenges the "hierarchy of suffering" present in dominant narratives of the Holocaust that ignores and represses the sexual violence that women experienced under Nazi occupation. The book review for Rana Mitter's *China's Good War: How World War II is Shaping a New Nationalism* challenges the Western-centered history of World War II and the unquestioned narratives of United States international dominance. The authors highlight the ways the government of China has drawn upon the memory of World War II to assert itself in the global international order.

Our cover image this year is a painting by journal editor and author Brittany Mondragon titled, "World War II Plane Dropping Ammunition for the Chinese Nationalists." It was inspired by the photograph, "An American plane drops ammunition for Chinese

troops in October 1944,” from the Bettmann Corbis archives.² The painting intends to disrupt Western-centered perspectives of history, beginning with World War II. As a whole, this year’s journal embraces the multiplicities and complexities of history.

Our first full-length article, “The Weight of Silk: An Exploratory Account into the Developing Relations between Byzantium and China,” discusses the geopolitical impact of the Silk Road in relation to the rise of the Byzantium Empire and the diplomatic interaction between Byzantium and China. Jeanna Lee examines how the commodity chain of silk justified Byzantium’s claim as the continuation of the Roman empire and how the controversial silkworm scandal (mid-500 CE) led to the decline of the commodity chain.

Our second article is Jennifer Duke’s “Troubled Memories: Researching Holocaust Testimony.” Duke analyzes the five types of memory (deep, anguished, humiliated, tainted, and unheroic) expressed by Holocaust survivors. Drawing on the works of Lawrence Langer, Robert Lay Shifton, and Viktor Frankl, it attempts to better understand the psychological and physical implications of the Holocaust beyond that of an impersonal and detached event of the past.

Our third article, is Jessie Williams’ “Sexual Violence Against Women During the Holocaust: Inside and Outside the Extermination Camps.” The fourth and final full-length article, “From Concubine to Ruler of China: The Lives of Emperor Wu Zetian and Empress Dowager Cixi,” focuses on the only two women rulers of China: Emperor Wu Zetian (r.624–705) and Empress Dowager Cixi (d.1835–1908). Author Hannah Ferla examines how these two women used opportunity and ambition to

² Pankaj Mishra, “Land And Blood: The Origins of the Second World War in Asia,” *The New Yorker* (blog), November 17, 2013, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2013/11/25/land-and-blood>.

rise from concubine to ruler where they gained full control over all of China. Rather than evaluating how effective they were as rulers, Ferla examines their ability to overcome the obstacles of patriarchal Chinese society.

This year's edition of the journal remembers the lives of six prominent figures who passed within this last year. In addition to the aforementioned in memoriam for Rush Limbaugh by David Swistock, John Neilson, and Devin Gillen, co-authors Celeste Nunez and Jacquelyne Anton reflect on the life, career, and legacy of late United States Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Next, Sarah Shumate writes in remembrance of Viola Smith, one of American's first professional female drummers whose Swing and Jazz musical career launched during the 1920s. In addition to these prominent female figures, Jennessa Howard remembers the accomplishments and life of Indigenous leader Marshall McKay. In the fourth piece, Jose Castro discusses the accomplishments of Dr. Mario Molina, a Mexican chemist who contributed much to the field and won the 1995 Nobel Prize in Chemistry for his research in atmospheric chemistry. Next, Cecelia Smith explores the life of John Lewis, the former United States Congress Representative from Georgia and lifelong civil rights activist.

This year's journal reintroduces a "State of the Field" section that reflects on current methodological and theoretical shifts within historiography. "A Natural Arch in Environmental Historiography" by Joseph Esparza examines the state of environmental history after the late Alfred W. Crosby's pivotal contributions to the interdisciplinary field. Esparza terms the methodological shifts "The Crosby Effect."

The "History in the Making" section consists of two contributions this year. "Barbara Johns: A Lasting Legacy in National Statuary" by Hannah Knight brings to light the story of fourteen-year-old Civil Rights activist Barbara Johns, who led a mass school-walkout in 1951. Knight explores how Barbara John's achievements are

finally being highlighted with the installation of a statue at the National Statuary, which will replace the former statue of Confederate General Robert E. Lee. In “How Museums Have Adapted to Life During COVID-19,” Erika Kelley provides an overview of the strategies museums are utilizing during the COVID-19 closures and the challenges each museum is confronting. By conducting personal interviews with museum staff, Kelley compares how the Robert and Frances Fullerton Museum of Art, the J. Paul Getty Museum, the Harvard Museum of the Ancient Near East, and the British Museum have adapted during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The “Notes from the Archives” section includes a photographic essay of World War II as told through private memory and family photographs. Authors, Brittany Mondragon, Cecelia Smith, Jacquelyne Anton, and Sarah West seek to disrupt unquestioned and supposed universal national narratives of World War II by focusing on personal stories and private memories.

In the “Travels Through History” section, Cecelia Smith provides an exploratory report of the lighthouses dotting the California coastline. Smith gives a brief history of several memorable Californian lighthouses and reflects on their turn from utilitarian beacons to historical monuments. Accompanying her overviews of the lighthouses are a series of photographs, giving the piece a rather welcoming and familiar tone.

In the last section of this year’s edition of *History in the Making*, we have eight reviews consisting of recent film and book releases. Fred De Leon begins the literature review portion with his review of the book *The Compensations of Plunder: How China Lost Its Treasures*. Author Brittany Mondragon discusses the history of criminalization and demonization of the Caribbean religion Obeah in her comparative review of *Obeah, Race and Racism: Caribbean Witchcraft in the English Imagination* and *Experiments with Power: Obeah and the Remaking of Religion in Trinidad*.

History in the Making

Alexander Serrano reviews *Vernacular Industrialism in China: Local Innovation and Translated Technologies in the Making of a Cosmetics Empire, 1900–1940*. Josefina Pettit begins the film review section by discussing the 2020 film *Mulan* and its transformation since the original sixth-century poem, “The Ballad of Mulan.” Author Moises Gonzalez provides a review of the film *The Trial of the Chicago 7* (2020) and Erika Kelley returns to this year’s edition of the journal with a review of the film *Secrets of the Saqqara Tomb* (2020). The journal ends with a review of the film *Ya no estoy aquí (I’m No Longer Here)* (2020). Author Jose Castro provides a vivid description of cumbia and its importance in Latin America.

Jacquelyne R. Anton and Angel Rivas
Chief Editors

Acknowledgements

We would like to begin by thanking the authors and editors for all of their hard work and dedication. Due to their commitment and passion for the diverse subjects contained within, we are proud to present the largest edition of *History in the Making* thus far. This journal would not be possible if not for the meticulous historical research provided by the authors themselves. We thank those who continue to submit their original research to the journal—without you, such timely and thoughtful editions would not be possible. In addition, the editorial board’s attentive one-on-one work the authors continues to bring the pieces to their greatest potential.

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Lastly, we thank everyone who has supported the faculty, editors, and authors during this process—only through their collective efforts were we able to produce this journal.

Jacquelyne R. Anton and Angel Rivas
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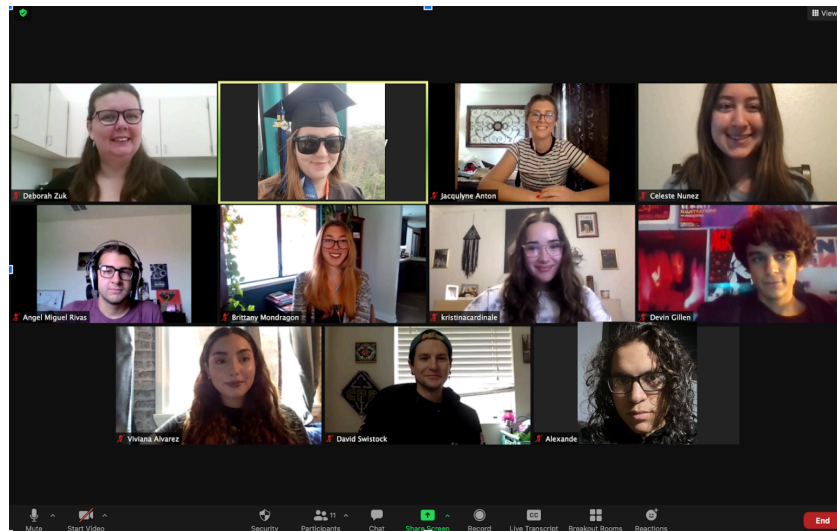
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Middle row from left: Angel Rivas, Brittany Mondragon, Kristina
Cardinale, Devin Gillen

Bottom row from left: Viviana Alvarez, David Swistock,
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Not pictured: Jean Martinez

History in the Making